

4 said processor retrieving the responses from the memory
5 and downloading the responses to an external data
6 collection unit utilizing the communications link.

1 4. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey
2 device of claim 2 further comprising a paging transmitter
3 in communication with the processor that pages a
4 restaurant manager when a customer response meets
5 predetermined criteria, and wherein the processor
6 includes logic for determining whether a response meets
7 the predetermined criteria.

1 5. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey
2 device of claim 1 further comprising an electronic
3 calculator within the tray.

1 6. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey
2 device of claim 5 wherein the means within the tray for
3 obtaining and storing responses from the customer
4 includes:

5 a visual display that presents customer satisfaction
6 survey questions to the customer;

7 a survey keypad for entering the customer's
8 responses to the survey questions;

9 a memory that stores the customer responses; and

10 a processor that sends survey questions to the
11 display, collects responses from the survey keypad, and
12 sends the responses to the memory.

1 7. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey
2 device of claim 6 wherein the calculator includes a
3 numerical calculator keypad, and the processor collects
4 inputs from the calculator keypad, performs calculations,
5 and displays results of the calculations on the visual
6 display.

1 /8. A system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer regarding a level of customer
3 satisfaction, said system comprising:

4 a tip tray that includes means within the tray for
5 obtaining and storing responses from the customer
6 regarding the level of customer satisfaction; and

7 a base unit that collects the responses from the
8 tray.

1 9. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 8 wherein the tip tray also
3 includes a calculator.

1 10. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 9 wherein the means within the
3 tray for obtaining and storing responses from the
4 customer includes:

5 a visual display that presents customer satisfaction
6 survey questions to the customer;

7 a survey keypad for entering the customer's
8 responses to the survey questions;

9 a memory that stores the customer responses; and

10 a tray processor that sends survey questions to the
11 display, collects responses from the keypad, and sends
12 the responses to the memory.

1 11. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 10 further comprising an
3 external communications link in communication with the
4 tray processor, said tray processor retrieving the
5 responses from the memory and downloading the responses
6 to the base unit utilizing the communications link.

1 12. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 11 further comprising a paging
3 transmitter in communication with the tray processor that
4 pages a restaurant manager when a customer response meets
5 predetermined criteria, and wherein the tray processor

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6 includes logic for determining whether a response meets
7 the predetermined criteria.

1 13. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 12 wherein the base unit
3 includes a battery recharger connected to a power pin,
4 and the tray includes a rechargeable battery connected to
5 a power receptacle, and the battery is recharged by
6 stacking the tray on the base unit so that the power pin
7 on the base unit is in contact with the power receptacle
8 on the tray.

1 14. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 13 wherein the base unit also
3 includes a base unit processor connected to a data pin,
4 and the tray includes a data receptacle connected to the
5 external communications link, said base unit processor
6 using the communications link to program the tray
7 processor with survey questions, and to download from the
8 tray memory, the customer responses.

1 15. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 14 further comprising a
3 plurality of trays that stack on top each other on the
4 base unit, each of said trays having a power pin and a
5 data pin that align with a power receptacle and a data

6 receptacle, respectively, on an adjacently stacked tray,
7 whereby the recharger recharges the battery in all of the
8 stacked trays simultaneously, the base unit processor
9 programs all of the stacked trays simultaneously, and the
10 base unit processor downloads customer responses from all
11 of the stacked trays simultaneously.

1 16. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 15 further comprising an
3 analysis function remotely located from the base unit,
4 wherein the base unit includes a communications port
5 through which the collected responses are communicated to
6 the analysis function.

1 17. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 16 wherein the analysis function
3 is resident on a personal computer (PC), and the
4 communications port comprises an RS232 interface.

1 18. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 17 wherein the analysis function
3 is resident on a remote computer, and the communications
4 port communicates with the remote computer over a global
5 computer network.

1 19. The system for obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 18 further comprising a
3 plurality of base units connected in series to a smart
4 base, said smart base being connected to the analysis
5 function.

1 /20. A method of obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer regarding a level of customer
3 satisfaction, said method comprising the steps of:
4 presenting customer survey questions to the customer
5 on a display screen mounted in a tip tray;
6 collecting the customer's responses to the survey
7 questions with a survey keypad mounted in the tip tray;
8 and
9 storing the customer responses in a memory in the
10 tip tray.

1 21. The method of obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 20 further comprising
3 downloading the customer responses to a database.

1 22. The method of obtaining and storing responses
2 from a customer of claim 20 further comprising offering
3 the customer a chance to win a prize in exchange for
4 participating in the customer satisfaction survey.